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RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 9180  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 000379

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TAGS: PTER PGOV NP

SUBJECT: MAOIST LEADER PLAYS GOOD COP, SORT OF

REF: A. KATHMANDU 244

¶B. KATHMANDU 373

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

¶1. (SBU) Playing off a series of bloody interviews by his deputy, which have been matched by a lot of violence, Maoist leader Prachanda gave an interview in the country's largest daily on February 7, saying, "we are open to holding unconditional discussions on all issues including constituent assembly." However, he added a lot of caveats. Portraying the Maoists as wanting peace, he went on to say that Maoists would "reciprocate positively" if a government cease-fire seemed "to be leading to meaningful dialogue." Touting the Maoist-Parties 12-point understanding and claiming the Maoists wanted "no bloodshed," Prachanda called for the seven-party alliance to join the Maoists in forming a common army as well as a "parallel government," and to work for a constituent assembly with the assistance of the United Nations. He predicted that, "if things go as we have said," the civil war "should end in two to three months." Prachanda spouted anti-American rhetoric, calling America "the biggest terrorist of the world today." Asserting that the U.S. Ambassador "exaggerates while talking about us," Prachanda stressed that the Maoists were not in a position to surround Kathmandu as claimed by the U.S. However, he later noted that Maoists had increased their "military prowess in preparation for capturing Kathmandu," but "the rulers of America and India got too serious." He complained that "weapons came from America, training from America, American fortification came and American money came," causing the Maoists to be unable to capture the capital. End Summary.

Prachanda's Good-Cop to Bhatarai's Bad-Cop

¶2. (U) On February 7, the day before nationwide municipal elections, and day three of the Maoists' violent February 5-11 nationwide strike to disturb the elections, Maoist leader Prachanda, flanked by his deputy Baburam Bhatarai, gave an exclusive interview to the vernacular Kantipur, the largest newspaper in the country, and its sister English

language daily, the Kathmandu Post. Prachanda attempted to portray the Maoists as reasonable and ready to talk to the government--under certain conditions. Prachanda's good-cop interview followed a series of five articles in influential vernacular papers since the January 2 end of the Maoist's unilateral cease-fire, in which Bhattarai clearly stated the Maoist intention to use violence to achieve the goal of a totalitarian state (ref A). The Kathmandu Post article appeared with a photo of Prachanda and Bhattarai sitting side by side, smiling, demonstrating their unity. (Note: Full text of the interview with accompanying photos is available on-line at <http://www.kantipuronline.com>. End note.)

#### Prachanda's Olive Branch to the Parties

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¶3. (C) Prachanda's interview came at a time of increased Maoist violence (ref B) and offered an olive branch to the seven-parties: when pressured to denounce Maoist violence and rethink their 12-point agreement with the Maoists, the Parties can now point to Prachanda's assertions that the Maoists want a peaceful solution. Prachanda reaffirmed the 12-point understanding with the Parties saying, "the understanding we have reached with the seven political parties is the bottom line at the moment." Of the Maoists' ultimate goal he noted, "since we belong to a communist party, our maximum goals are socialism and communism. Those are the maximum goals of all those accepting Marxism, Leninism and Maoism as philosophical and ideological assumptions. Given the international power balance and the overall economic, political and social realities of the country, we can't attain those goals at the moment. We must accept this ground reality."

#### But Doesn't Really Say He's Ready for Peace

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¶4. (C) Prachanda claimed, despite the absence of any moves in that direction during their recent unilateral cease-fire, that "obviously the three-month cease-fire was for finding an exit. The king has said that the 'momentary cease-fire' was a ploy to intensify violence. We didn't have that intention. The cease-fire was a pressure for a peaceful way out, not a tactic. Later, we added one more month so as to further pressurize the king for a peaceful way out. He thought - their backbone has been broken, they have announced cease-fire for power accumulation!" However, Prachanda stated that the Maoists would not participate in dialogue if the government declared a unilateral cease-fire. He explained, "we can't go for talks only with a cease-fire. We should look into the intention behind the truce. If the cease-fire comes as a card with the intention of defusing the movement, we won't accept it. We are open to holding unconditional discussions on all issues including constituent assembly. We will reciprocate positively if the cease-fire seems to be leading to meaningful dialogue." However, Prachanda added, "We don't see that possibility." When asked when the violence would end, Prachanda stated, "I can't answer this question like an astrologer. If things go as we have said, it should end in two to three months. We want to see things crystal clear by April 6. We have been trying to see the civil war has an outlet." (Note: April 6, 1990 is the date multi-party democracy came to Nepal. End Note.)

#### Prachanda Calls for Creation of a Parallel Government...

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¶5. (U) Prachanda called upon the seven-party alliance to create a parallel government, including a common army. He claimed that Maoists would accept either a constituent assembly or restoration of Parliament, if there were no authoritarian power. He stated, "we have told the seven parties, let's form a common army by including your people. One of the bases of confusion about us is that we have an army, we have guns. There are confusions about to what extent we are committed to democracy. Let's sit together with all including the seven parties; let's decide together who should be commanders, commissars, chief of the army;

let's make a common army. Let's make a national army. We have made this proposal to both Girija (Koirala, the Nepali Congress President) and Madhav (Kumar Nepal, the UML Leader), saying that this will make clear our understanding on democracy and constituent assembly." Prachanda went on to say, "let's make a common army for constituent assembly and a democratic republic. Let's form a parallel government of the parties and the Maoists. You restore the House, we will support you; invite us for dialogue, we will come; let's make the army common by including all; that will make for an official and legitimate government. That will represent the majority people - the government of the (seven) parties and a party that rebelled. After forming such a government, we can approach the United Nations and the international community, saying 'this is the legitimate government of Nepal.'"

...Followed by UN Mediation

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**¶6.** (U) Prachanda noted that international mediation, with the approval of the U.S., India and China, would be necessary to end the bloodshed. He explained why international mediation was necessary: "On the one hand, the political forces within the country are not able to convince one another. Secondly, it is the geopolitics between two giant countries - China and India. International mediation is essential due to these reasons. We think that the UN is the best option, but we don't stick to that alone. The UN or any other reliable organization will work. It should be agreeable to China, India and the United States. We want no bloodshed. We want the bloodshed to stop and go for a solution, but if we don't take action, he won't give us the rights." Prachanda also called on an international role to monitor weapons of both the Maoists and the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA). He stated, "with the process of holding election (to a constituent assembly) by the interim government under way, there will be interaction with the parties and all the political forces in the country including the monarchists. As the election looms, let's maintain reliable international vigil on the Royal Army and the People's Liberation Army. The country will get a direction after the results of the election are out. Once it is clear, let's change the army and the weapons into a national army and national weapons respectively. The weapons of both sides should be put together and both the armies should be transformed into one under the supervision of the United Nations or another reliable agency. That will result in the national army."

America Biggest Terrorist Today

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**¶7.** (U) While Prachanda also mentioned India and China, his main international focus was "American imperialism." He noted that "the Maoist movement has become the main fear of foreign powers- especially American imperialism. (They) have termed us a 'momentary challenge.' They have been looking at us strategically, saying that a 'Maoist movement is flaring up in a land between giant countries China and India, it can strike the whole world tomorrow.' They are cautiously trying to give out a wrong message in this regard." Later, Prachanda called the U.S. terrorists, asserting "the biggest terrorist of the world today is America, and its ruling class. They gave birth to Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. Iraq is in the making of another Vietnam, Afghanistan is on the way. They call us terrorist? They have been giving impetus to the purely traditional force of calling the people subjects. You must have met (US Ambassador) Moriarty several times. He exaggerates while talking about us. As if the Maoists will take over, as if they will surround Kathmandu when we are not in that position. What they have been saying in a roundabout way is that the army is nice, but the king didn't understand. Has America tried to make the people sovereign anywhere? Why is America afraid of us? Because it is in an ideological crisis."

**¶8.** (U) Prachanda agreed with the analysis of American think tanks that Nepal's Maoist revolution was a threat that could spill over to the region. "If it's successful in Nepal, it

has and will have direct impact on the one billion people of India, and it will also spill over into China. When it affects two or two and a half billion people, it means it will have impact all over the world."

#### America Supports Autocratic Rule

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¶ 9. (U) The Maoist supremo decried America's past history in bringing autocratic regimes to power. "American intellectuals...are of the opinion that the Maoists shouldn't prevail, rather it's all right to have an autocratic regime. Don't we know who made Marcos? Who brought Pinochet forward in Chile?" When the reporter asked if Prachanda believed that America was "the real support behind the king," Prachanda replied, "We think so. Facts substantiate that. Even the parties are in confusion about whether we will prevail. Sometimes, we feel sad. We have told the parties, you take the leadership role, we don't need it. The only thing is that the country should find a way out. We have said that the party leaders can lead the democracy. We are not in a hurry to lead the nation." On Nepal's political situation since the King took over on February 1, 2005, he claimed that "India and America don't want to finish the monarchy off. They want the monarchy to come to a compromise."

#### American Military Support Prevented Maoist Takeover

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¶ 10. (U) Though claiming that the Maoists would eventually succeed, Prachanda lamented that U.S. military assistance had prevented the Maoists from advancing to Kathmandu and created internal rifts within the Maoists. He explained, "militarily, after we successfully carried out big operations...we had thought the army would lose faster than the police, maybe within a year or two. There was increase in multiples in the military prowess in preparation for capturing Kathmandu. Before that, the rulers of America and India got too serious. Weapons came from America, training from America, American fortification came and American money came. All the things came from America and India. They got strong fortifications. On the one hand, the war got prolonged. There was too much propaganda against us, which we couldn't stop. On the other, we couldn't provide ideological and political training to the new recruits. They came as they were. When we were getting over all these shortcomings, you saw internal rift within us."

#### Comment

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¶ 11. (C) Prachanda's good cop to Bhattarai's belligerent bad-cop will likely give the political parties enough cover to continue their 12-point agreement with the Maoists for a while longer, even in the face of deplorable violence by the Maoists. A close read of the interview reveals that Prachanda's next tactical goal is to lock the Parties into some sort of alternative, parallel government with the Maoists. That presumably would make the Maoist-Parties working agreement into a permanent alliance. Ultimately, Prachanda's interview gives no indication that the Maoists intend to walk away from their agenda of violence and revolution.

MORIARTY